

YOUR 5 OR 6 YEAR OLD

POINTS TO REMEMBER

SAFETY

- **ALWAYS** use a car seat for your child and make sure it is properly installed in the back seat, according to the manufacturer's instructions and the vehicle owner's manual. **DO** this until your child weighs 60 pounds or his head is higher than the back of the car seat. The back seat is the safest place for all children younger than 13 to ride. **NEVER** leave your child alone in the car, house, or yard.
- **NOW** is the time to teach your child to swim. **DO NOT** let your child play around any water (lake, stream, pool, or ocean) unless an adult is watching. Even if your child knows how to swim, never let her swim alone. **NEVER** let your child swim in fast-moving water. Teach your child to never dive into water unless an adult has checked the depth of the water. When on any boat, be sure your child is wearing an appropriate fitting, US Coast Guard-approved life jacket. Be sure that swimming pools in your community, complex, or home have a 4-sided fence with a self-closing, self-latching gate. Continue to put sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher) on your child before she goes outside to play or swim.
- **INSTALL** smoke detectors on every level of your home. **CHANGE** the batteries twice a year when the time changes in the spring and fall. Install carbon monoxide detectors/alarms certified by UL, in the hallway near every separate sleeping areas of the home. Make an escape plan in case of fire in your hall. Practice what you and your child would do if you had a fire. Keep all matches and lighters out of reach of children. If your clothes catch on fire...**DO NOT RUN! STOP, DROP and ROLL!**
- **SAFETY PROOF** your home. **LOCK** poisons, matches, and electrical tools in a secure place. If your child accidentally takes medication, or puts a poisonous product in his/her mouth, call the **POISON HOTLINE 1-800-222-1222**. If it is necessary to keep a gun in your home, keep it unloaded and locked in a safe place with the ammunition locked separately. Keep the key where children cannot reach.
- **TEACH** your child safety skills when walking along streets and in your neighborhood. **TEACH** your child safety rules when talking with strangers (answering the telephone or door, never getting into a stranger's car, and/or going anywhere with a stranger). **MAKE SURE** your child's school teaches children on how to deal with strangers.
- **BE SURE** your child always wears appropriate safety equipment when biking, skating, in-line skating, snowboarding, or horseback riding. (Tailor the list of activities appropriate to the area). Make sure your child wears a properly fitted, approved helmet every time she rides a bike; **NEVER** let your child ride in the street. Your child is too young to ride in the street safely.
- **BEGIN** to teach your child safe street habits. Teach your child to stop at the curb, and then look to the left, to the right, and back to the left again. Teach your child **NEVER** to cross the street without a grown-up.
- **CHILDREN** need to learn where to wait for the school bus and should have an adult watching closely when getting on and off the bus.
- **TEACH** your child that it is **NEVER OK** for an adult to tell a child to keep secrets from parents, to talk about private parts, or to ask a child to help with his or her private parts.
- **IF** you or your child is experiencing emotional, physical, or sexual abuse, **TELL** your health care provider or call the **ABUSE HOTLINE 1-800-752-6200** for help. Teach your child the correct terms for body parts, including their private parts. Explain to your child no one should touch these body parts without permission.

NUTRITION

- **BREAKFAST** is an important meal. Research shows that eating breakfast helps children learn and behave better at school.
- **HELP** your child learn to choose appropriate foods, including plenty of fruits and vegetables every day. Aim for at least 5 servings of fruits or vegetables every day by including them in most of your meals and snacks.

- **TEACH on My Plate**-more grains, fruits and vegetables, and less sodium. Limit juice to 4 to 6 oz. per day of 100% juice. Do not serve fruit drinks. Make sure children ages 4-8 get approximately 2 cups of low-fat milk each day. Adequate **CALCIUM** is essential. Low-fat yogurt and cheese are good alternatives to milk.
- **BE a model eater** for your child and teach good eating habits.

HEALTHY TEETH

- **BE SURE** that your child brushes his/her teeth twice a day using a soft toothbrush and a pea-sized amount of fluoridated toothpaste and flosses once a day with your help. Be sure to watch him/her while brushing and flossing. Help him/her if necessary.
- **IF** your child does not have a regular dentist (also called a dental home), it is important to get one.

CARE and INTERACTIONS

- **Discuss the importance of doing the same activities at the same time daily.** Decide which routines you want for your family. Observe them every day. Your child will look forward to these special traditions.
- **LISTEN to and RESPECT** your child as well as your partner. Serve as a positive ethical and behavioral role model.
- **TEACH** your child the difference between right and wrong. The goal of discipline is teaching appropriate behavior, not punishment.
- **PROVIDE** opportunities for your five or six year old to interact with other children and teach your child how to get along with his/her peers.
- **ASSIGN** age-appropriate chores for your child and teach him/her responsibility.
- **PARTICIPATE** in games and other physical activities with your child. Encourage 60 minutes of physical activity a day.
- **HELP** your child manage anger and resolve conflict without violence. Do not allow hitting, biting, or other violent behavior.
- **PREPARE** your child for school. Talk about new opportunities, friends, and activities at school.
- **TOUR** your child’s school with him/her, visit when possible, and volunteer to help with activities when you can.

GROWTH and DEVELOPMENT

TYPICALLY A 5 YEAR OLD CHILD:	TYPICALLY A 6 YEAR OLD CHILD:
Dresses him/herself	Draws a 6-part person
Knows his/her name, address, and telephone number	Can do heel-to-toe steps
Balances on one foot for 5 seconds	Knows all letters
May be able to skip	Write letters
Counts on fingers	Counts
Plays make believe and dress-up	Understands right and wrong
Prints some letters and knows most letters	
Draws a person with three parts	
Copies a square and a triangle	

Reference: Hagan JF, Shaw JS, Duncan PM, eds. 2008. Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents, Third Edition. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics.